

Gaithersburg apartments denied

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A developer who wants to build 371 apartments in a Gaithersburg office park will have to go back to the drawing board after the County Council denied a zoning change Tuesday.

Shady Grove Investors I LLC, a Bethesda-based firm, proposed building three multi-family buildings on a 6-acre parcel originally intended for commercial space.

The land is part of the greater Shady Grove Executive Center office park off Research Boulevard and Omega Drive, which houses six office buildings and a hotel.

The developer requested that the zoning be changed to a PD-60 zone, a "floating" zone that would allow the flexibility for residential development on the land.

The County Council voted 5 to 2 to deny the request, with the majority of members saying it didn't meet the vision of the Shady Grove Area Master Plan, last updated in 1990.

"The master plans are challenges, but I do think they are entitled to significant respect," said Councilwoman Nancy M. Floreen (D-At large) of Garrett Park.

Councilmen Steven A. Silverman (D-At large) of Silver Spring and Michael L. Subin (D-At large) of Gaithersburg rebutted that the plan was a good project in an area where residential could work.

The parcel is near business parks on the southern tip of the Gaithersburg vicinity, outside city limits near Shady Grove Road. Less than a mile to the north is the Washingtonian Center; a few blocks to the south is the Shady Grove Life Science Center.